

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of Claims 1-42, as detailed in the Office Action issued September 20, 2006. In response, Applicants have amended Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 16, 17, and added Claims 43-46. It is respectfully submitted that the currently pending Claims 1, and 3-46 are in condition for immediate allowance. Applicants hereby respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections and issuance of allowance for the pending Claims 1, 3-46 in view of the following remarks.

Formal Matters

1. Summary of Interview

Applicants truly appreciated the opportunity for an interview with the Examiner conducted on October 12, 2006. During the interview, the Examiner kindly suggested that a limitation reciting participants having "no pre-assigned hierarchical roles" would distinguish the rejected claims over Roseman.

2. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication on page 5 of the Office Action that claims 8, 9, 18, 19 and 30 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner hold the rewriting of claims 8, 9, 18, 19 and 30 in abeyance until the rejection of the parent claims have been reconsidered.

Art Rejections

1. Claims 1-7, 10-17, 20-29, 31, 32, and 40-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Roseman, U.S. Patent No. 6,608,636 ("Roseman"). Claims 1, 13, 41 and 42 are independent claims. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the reasons stated below.

To be an "anticipation" rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, the reference must teach every element and recitation of the Applicants' claims. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are proper only when the claimed subject matter is identically disclosed or described in the prior art. Thus,

the reference must clearly and unequivocally disclose every element and recitation of the claimed invention.

Roseman is directed towards a multimedia conferencing system *See, e.g.*, Roseman Abstract. More specifically, Roseman describes a conferencing system in which participants utilize computers and audio and video communication systems to communicate collaboratively over a computer network. *See, e.g.*, id. column 1, lines 34-63. The user interface in Roseman creates a virtual conference table. *See, e.g.*, id. column 2, lines 38-60. In mimicking a conference table, the Roseman user interface displays all of the attendees of the conference, and all of the documents displayed on the table. *See, e.g.*, id. FIG. 9. Finally, a pointer is used to manipulate documents which are displayed on the conference table. *See, e.g.*, id. FIG. 10. The Examiner asserts that Roseman discloses a multimedia collaboration system configured so that presentation control of the session is exchanged freely between participants. *See* Office Action page 2. Applicants respectfully disagree because Roseman does not teach or suggest many limitations as detailed below.

i. Roseman does not teach or suggest, among other things, a limitation of “all participants ... have equal privilege levels regarding all controllable aspects of the session, the controllable aspects including at least a presentation control of the session and a viewer control of the session” as recited in independent Claim 1

Roseman does not teach the “equal privilege levels regarding all controllable aspects of the session.” At most, Roseman is egalitarian in the presenter role or an aspect of presentation control. In Roseman, individual participants cannot control what they view. Rather, a “common display” or common screen is distributed to all viewers. *See* Roseman column 1, lines 42-46; Roseman column 2, lines 16-18; Roseman column 7, lines 55-59; Roseman column 7, lines 30-34. Applicants respectfully submit that Roseman does not teach or suggest at least the limitation of all participants ... have equal privilege levels regarding all controllable aspects of the session, the controllable aspects including at least a presentation control of the session and a viewer control of the session” as recited in Claim 1. Since Claims 3-12, 44, and 45 depend from Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that for the same foregoing reasons, these claims are not anticipated by Roseman. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that Claims 1, 3-12, 44, and 45 be reconsidered and allowed.

ii. Roseman does not teach or suggest, among other things, a feature of granting a participant an “independent control including at least dynamically selecting which of a plurality of presentations to view in the collaboration session” as recited in independent Claim 13

As explained above, Roseman does not allow participants to control their view or screen layout, as distinct from the current application. Particularly, Roseman does not teach or disclose the limitation of “independent control including at least dynamically selecting which of a plurality of presentations to view in the collaboration session” as recited in Claim 13. Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 13, and all the claims dependent therefrom, are not anticipated by Roseman. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that Claims 13-39 and 46 be reconsidered and allowed.

iii. Roseman does not teach or suggest , among other things, “client devices having equal privilege levels ...”, and particularly, “enabling the first client device and the second client device to present their respective information at any time in the collaboration session” as recited in independent Claim 41

For the same foregoing reasons stated regarding Claim 1, Applicants hereby respectfully submit that Roseman fails to disclose at least the following claim limitation recited in independent claim 41, “client devices having equal privilege levels ...”

In addition, Roseman does not teach or suggest a step of “enabling the first client device and the second client device to present their respective information at any time in the collaboration session” as recited in Claim 41. As disclosed in Roseman, the information from each participant is submitted and presented only through a central host computer, thereby preventing more than one presenter from presenting materials at the same time or without time overlap. *See* Roseman column 1, lines 42-46; Roseman column 2, lines 16-18; Roseman column 7, lines 55-59; Roseman column 7, lines 30-34.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 41 is not anticipated by Roseman. It is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

iv. Roseman does not teach or suggest, among other things, “assigning control of the central presentation region to the client device that most recently presents information to the central presentation region”, as recited in independent Claim 42

Applicants respectfully submit that Roseman fails to disclose at least the following claim limitations recited in independent claim 42:

“wherein the method comprises: assigning control of the central presentation region to the client device that most recently presents information to the central presentation region.”

The Examiner does not specify any disclosure within Roseman with respect to claim 42. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

v. Roseman does not teach or suggest, among other things, “each of the plurality of participants has no pre-assigned hierarchical roles in control of a multimedia collaboration session and information is exchanged freely between the plurality of participants”, as recited in the new independent Claim 43.

As disclosed in Roseman, the Requester is the person who has requested and established a conference for multiple participants including the Requester itself to attend. *See* Roseman column 3, lines 22-23. Prior to the conference, the Requester is given special privileges by the system to control, among other things, who is to be invited, and how the conference is conducted. *See id.* column 3, lines 29-62. Even during the conference, the Requester, as a participant of the conference, may have additional privileges. For example, the Requester can override time limits given to those who speak. *See id.* column 12, lines 35-38. The Requester can also end the on-going conference. *See* “Initiator” in Fig. 22A. In light of the above, Roseman does not give all of the participants in a conference session equal privileges with regard to general control of the conference session, such as when to start or end a speech or the entire conference, even though each participant may have similar or equal right or freedom to brainstorm and even speak at the same time during the conference session. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Roseman does not teach a multimedia collaboration system where no participant has “pre-assigned hierarchical roles.” Applicants note with appreciation that during the interview the Examiner kindly suggested that this would be a distinctive feature. Accordingly, Applicants

hereby submit that the new independent claim 43 is not anticipated at least for the limitation of “wherein each of the plurality of participants has no pre-assigned hierarchical roles.”

2. Claims 33-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roseman, U.S. Patent No. 6,608,636 (“Roseman”). Applicants respectfully traverse each of these rejections for the following reason. Since claims 33-39 depend upon claim 13, and since Roseman, as discussed above, does not disclose all the limitations of claim 13, Applicants submit that claims 33-39 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 13. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 33-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

In the event that a variance exists between the amount tendered and that required by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to enter and consider this Reply, or to prevent abandonment of the present application, please charge or credit such variance to the undersigned's Deposit Account No. 50-2613 (Order No. 45098.00011.UTL1.P1068).

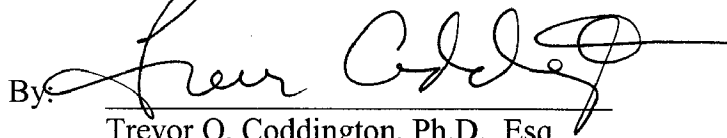
Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: _____

12/19/06

By: _____



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